



element seven: **CONNECTING**

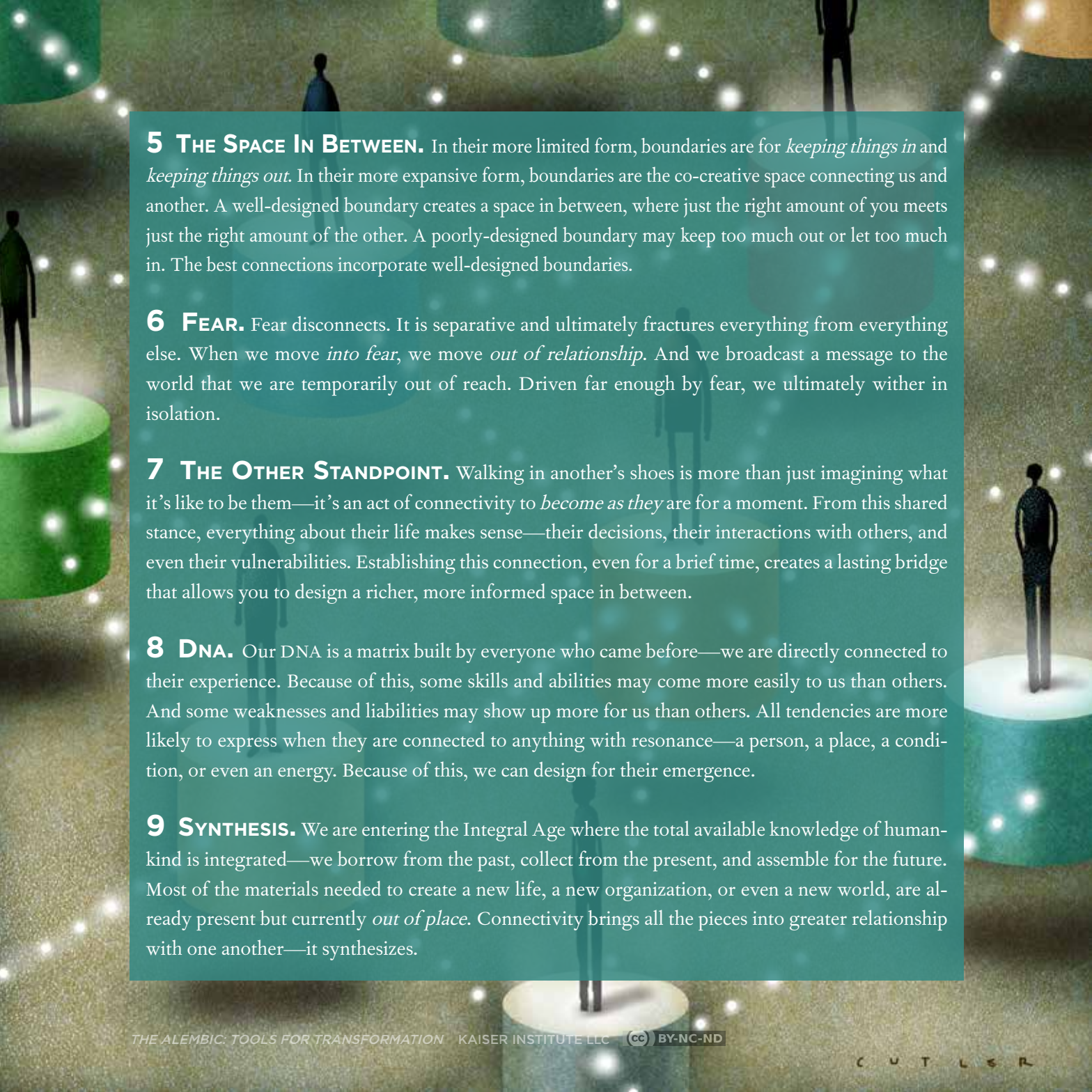
PRACTICING THE 13 ELEMENTS OF ALCHEMY

1 TOTAL INTERCONNECTIVITY. Everything is connected to everything—it all arose from the same place. Because of this, you can understand *something* about everything in the universe by coming into relationship deeply enough with any *one thing*. And you can know a lot about any *place* in the universe by more fully diving into where you are right now.

2 THE WORLD WE OCCUPY. In many ways the universe we experience is the sum of our conscious connections. If we are isolated and disconnected, we occupy a small bubble that seems separate from, and acted on, by everything outside of us. If we are open and inviting, we occupy a larger bubble incorporating much more of the world. As our bubble expands, we experience ourselves more and more at the center of action—we now *act on the world* more than the *world acts on us*.

3 MULTIPLYING RESOURCES. What we are aware of is a small fraction of what we are actually connected to. So our access to resources is often limited by our consciousness—and most of what we could partner with may be presently out of sight. Because of this, a small increase of awareness usually precipitates a large increase in resources.

4 ISOLATION. When facing difficult situations, we may have a strong urge to draw back and isolate. Which not only disconnects us from the specific situation, but from everything else around us. We may even draw back from ideas that seem foreign or contrary. Often what appears as retreat from threat is actually an act of attachment—what we think we are getting away from is now dominating our time and attention. And what we've attempted to escape has now captured us.



5 THE SPACE IN BETWEEN. In their more limited form, boundaries are for *keeping things in* and *keeping things out*. In their more expansive form, boundaries are the co-creative space connecting us and another. A well-designed boundary creates a space in between, where just the right amount of you meets just the right amount of the other. A poorly-designed boundary may keep too much out or let too much in. The best connections incorporate well-designed boundaries.

6 FEAR. Fear disconnects. It is separative and ultimately fractures everything from everything else. When we move *into fear*, we move *out of relationship*. And we broadcast a message to the world that we are temporarily out of reach. Driven far enough by fear, we ultimately wither in isolation.

7 THE OTHER STANDPOINT. Walking in another's shoes is more than just imagining what it's like to be them—it's an act of connectivity to *become as they* are for a moment. From this shared stance, everything about their life makes sense—their decisions, their interactions with others, and even their vulnerabilities. Establishing this connection, even for a brief time, creates a lasting bridge that allows you to design a richer, more informed space in between.

8 DNA. Our DNA is a matrix built by everyone who came before—we are directly connected to their experience. Because of this, some skills and abilities may come more easily to us than others. And some weaknesses and liabilities may show up more for us than others. All tendencies are more likely to express when they are connected to anything with resonance—a person, a place, a condition, or even an energy. Because of this, we can design for their emergence.

9 SYNTHESIS. We are entering the Integral Age where the total available knowledge of humankind is integrated—we borrow from the past, collect from the present, and assemble for the future. Most of the materials needed to create a new life, a new organization, or even a new world, are already present but currently *out of place*. Connectivity brings all the pieces into greater relationship with one another—it synthesizes.